

Message Text

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ACTION MC-02

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MILL, TH, ID

SUBJ: THOMAS B. REILLY AND JERRY HARRIS, HARRIS MARKETING CO.LTD.

REF: A. STATE 147282

B. MC CASE 97661/IMPORT SERVICES

SUMMARY: EMBASSY HAS HAD SOME, BUT NOT EXTENSIVE CONTACT WITH GERALD (JERRY) HARRIS OF HARRIS MARKETING CO., LTD.; REILLY IS LESS WELL KNOWN. NEITHER IS BELIEVED TO HAVE ANY CURRENT USG AFFILIATIONS, ALTHOUGH HARRIS BELIEVED TO BE FORMER USG EMPLOYEE IN VIETNAM. NEITHER IS ON AUTHORIZED APO ROSTER. FIRM IS SMALL IMPORT-EXPORT ORGANIZATION DEALING IN WIDE VARIETY OF COMMODITIES. HARRIS SEEMS TO BE A SOMEWHAT OPPORTUNISTIC OPERATOR, BUT WE HAVE NO REASON TO BELIEVE COMPANY'S OPERATIONS ARE NOT LEGITIMATE. END SUMMARY.

1. HARRIS MARKETING COMPANY, LTD.: IN DECEMBER 1974 HARRIS VOLUNTARILY COMPLETED AND SUBMITTED TO EMBASSY'S COMMERCIAL SECTION A WDTR QUESTIONNAIRE ON COMPANY. (WDTR WAS NOT COMPLETED WHEN IT WAS DETERMINED THIS IS AN AMERICAN COMPANY.) IN QUESTIONNAIRE, COMPANY'S BUSINESS ACTIVITIES WERE DESCRIBED AS "IMPORTER OF SCRAP IRON, STEEL, COPPER AND BRASS, HEAVY MACHINERY, ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT, CHEMICALS, ETC." AND "EXPORTER OF RICE, MINERAL ORES AND LUMBER". GERALD HARRIS, AGE 60,
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WAS LISTED AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND THOMAS B. REILLY AS MANAGING

DIRECTOR. ACCORDING TO QUESTIONNAIRE, FIRM WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1971, HAS 15 EMPLOYEES, AUTHORIZED CAPITAL OF 200,000 BAHT (APPROXIMATELY \$10,000) AND ANNUAL SALES VOLUME OF 80 MILLION BAHT. EMBASSY HAS CHECKED WITH FIRM'S FINANCIAL REFERENCE (BANGKOK BANK) WHICH STATES HARRIS MAINTAINS CURRENT ACCOUNT, BUT NO CREDIT FACILITIES. HARRIS GAVE AS TRADE REFERENCES: DEFENSE SYSTEMS INTERNATIONAL, POWDER SPRINGS, GEORGIA; AND NORTHROP WORLD-WIDE AIRCRAFT SERVICES, LOWTON, OKLAHOMA.

2. SUMMARY OF EMBASSY'S RECENT CONTACTS WITH HARRIS MAY BEST ILLUSTRATE RANGE AND NATURE OF COMPANY'S BUSINESS INTERESTS: (A) LAST DECEMBER AND JANUARY, EMBASSY COMMERCIAL ATTACHE MET AND TALKED WITH HARRIS SEVERAL TIMES IN CONNECTION WITH A RATHER COMPLICATED PROPOSED SALE OF THAI SUGAR TO A NORWEIGIAN COMPANY WHICH INVOLVED PRIVATE AMERICAN FINANCING. DEAL APPARENTLY NEVER CAME OFF FOR UNKNOWN REASONS. MAY BE SIGNIFICANT THAT PRESUMABLY RESPECTABLE WASHINGTON LAW FIRM, CHAPMAN, DUFF AND LENZINI (PARTNER OSCAR L. CHAPMAN IS FORMER SECRETARY OF INTERIOR) REPRESENTED U.S. FINANCIAL INTERESTS. ON ONE OCCASION, LAWYER MICHAEL S. LANG, REPRESENTING CHAPMAN, DUFF AND LENZINI, CALLED ON COMMERCIAL ATTACHE IN COMPANY OF HARRIS, AND SPOKE HIGHLY OF HIM. (B) EARLIER THIS MONTH, HARRIS CALLED ON AN EMBASSY POLITICAL OFFICER TO ASK ABOUT USG ATTITUDES, INCLUDING FOREIGN ASSETS CONTROL IMPLICATIONS, TOWARD ANOTHER PROPOSED DEAL WHEREBY RUMANIAN BUYERS WOULD PURCHASE SURPLUS HEAVY EARTHMOVING EQUIPMENT IN VIETNAM, FORMERLY USED BY U.S. CONTRACTORS AND RESELL IT TO A U.S. BUYER VIA HONG KONG. HARRIS WOULD EVIDENTLY SERVE AS MIDDLEMAN. (C) EMBASSY'S FSL COMMERCIAL SPECIALISTS HAVE HAD OCCASIONAL CONTACT WITH HARRIS IN NORMAL COURSE OF BUSINESS. AS AN EXAMPLE, HARRIS WAS RECENTLY CONTACTED BY FSL EMPLOYEE IN CONNECTION WITH OFFER BY U.S. EXPORTER WITH QUANTITY OF WASTE PAPER AVAILABLE FOR EXPORT; HARRIS TOLD FSL HE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN CONSIDERING THIS OR ALMOST ANY COMMODITY.

3. NEITHER HARRIS NOR REILLY ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE ANY CURRENT USG AFFILIATIONS, ALTHOUGH HARRIS CLAIMS TO HAVE BEEN EMPLOYED AS AN EMBASSY GENERAL SERVICES OFFICER IN SAIGON IN THE MID 1960S. HARRIS CLAIMS HIS SEPARATION FROM THE USG RELATED TO HIS MARRYING A VIETNAMESE NATIONAL. ANOTHER SOURCE, HOWEVER, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THAT SEVERANCE RESULTED FROM CERTAIN "SHADY DEALINGS" WHILE IN VIETNAM. EMBASSY UNABLE VERIFY LATTER ALLEGATION.

4. NEITHER HARRIS NOR REILLY ARE ON CURRENTLY AUTHORIZED APO ROSTER, ALTHOUGH ONE APO EMPLOYEE BELIEVES HARRIS WAS AUTHORIZED TO USE APO FACILITIES SOME TIME AGO. NEITHER HARRIS NOR REILLY ARE MEMBEERS AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, AL-

THOUGH HARRIS WAS FORMERLY A MEMBER WHILE EMPLOYED BY ANOTHER LOCAL COMPANY ASIAPAC-FARGO (THAILAND) LTD. WHICH, ACCORDING TO AMCHAM, IS INVOLVED IN MINING INTERESTS AND PURCHASE AND SALE OF LAND IN THAILAND. ONE OF ASIAPAC-FARGO'S HOLDINGS, INCIDENTALLY, IS PROPERTY AT NEARBY SEASIDE RESORT TOWN OF PATTAYA, WHICH IS LEASED TO U.S. MILITARY (JUSMAG) FOR USE AS A RECREATIONAL FACILITY FOR USG PERSONNEL.

5. NEITHER HARRIS NOR REILLY HAVE REGISTERED WITH EMBASSY'S CONSULAR SECTION.

6. IN SHORT, HARRIS SEEMS TO BE AN OPERATOR WITH GOOD CONNECTIONS WHO APPEARS TO OPERATE LEGITIMATELY. EMBASSY UNABLE COMMENT ON REILLY'S ALLEGED ACCESS TO APO FACILITIES BUT IT WOULD APPARENTLY BE ILLEGAL. WE ARE CHECKING RECORDS OF RTG COMMERCIAL REGISTRATION DEPARTMENT, AND WILL REPORT ANY ADDITIONAL PERTINENT INFORMATION WE MIGHT OBTAIN.
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